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REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS AND HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS

Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belgium, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Chad, Chile, China, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Guinea-Bissau, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Morocco, Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, Singapore, Sudan, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Zambia: draft resolution

Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa

Recalling its resolution 46/108 of 16 December 1991,

Having considered the reports of the Secretary-General 1/ and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2/

Bearing in mind that most of the affected countries are least developed countries,

Convinced of the necessity to strengthen the capacity within the United Nations system for the implementation and overall coordination of relief programmes for refugees, returnees and displaced persons,

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1/ A/47/529.

2/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 12 (A/47/12).

Welcoming the prospects for voluntary repatriation and durable solutions across the continent,

Recognizing the need for States to create conditions conducive to the prevention of flows of refugees and displaced persons and to voluntary repatriation,

Bearing in mind that the majority of refugees and displaced persons are women and children,

Noting with appreciation the commitment of the countries concerned to do their utmost to facilitate the provision of assistance to the affected populations and to take the necessary measures in this regard,

Realizing the importance of assisting the host countries, in particular those countries that have been hosting refugees for a longer time, to remedy environmental deterioration and the negative impact on public services and the development process,

Recognizing the High Commissioner's mandate to protect and assist refugees and returnees and the catalytic role she plays, together with the international community and development agencies, in addressing the broader issues of development relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons,

Bearing in mind the necessity to facilitate the work of humanitarian organizations, in particular the supply of food, medicine and health care to refugees, returnees and displaced persons, deploring acts of aggression against personnel of humanitarian organizations, particularly those that have led to loss of life, and stressing the need to guarantee the safety of the personnel of these organizations,

Deeply concerned about the critical humanitarian situation in African countries and in particular in the Horn of Africa caused by drought, conflict and population movements,

Welcoming regional efforts to resolve refugees problems such as the Declaration adopted at the Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the countries of the Horn of Africa on humanitarian issues, held at Addis Ababa on 8 and 9 April 1992, 3/

Taking into account the revised Special Emergency Programme for the Horn of Africa appeal of the Secretary-General,

Deeply concerned by the massive presence of refugees and externally displaced persons in Djibouti, representing more than 20 per cent of the total population of the country and by their uninterrupted influx due to the tragic situation in Somalia,

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3/ A/47/182, annex.

Also deeply concerned by the serious consequences of the presence of refugees and displaced persons to the already difficult economic and social situation in Djibouti, suffering from prolonged drought and the negative impact of the critical situation in the Horn of Africa,

Recognizing the fact that more than half of the refugees and externally displaced persons in Djibouti are located in Djibouti City in most serious difficulties and without direct international assistance, exerting an intolerable pressure on the limited resources of the country and the social infrastructure and causing in particular serious problems of security,

Also recognizing the need for cooperation between the Government of Djibouti and the Office of the High Commissioner and other relevant organizations to (a) find alternative solutions for the problem of refugees in Djibouti City and (b) to be able to mobilize the necessary external assistance to meet their specific needs,

Aware of the fact that the refugee population in the refugee camps across the country is in a precarious situation, facing the threat of famine, malnutrition and disease, and needs adequate external assistance for the provision of foodstuff, medical assistance and the necessary infrastructure for shelter,

Deeply concerned about the massive presence of refugees, voluntary returnees, displaced persons and demobilized soldiers in Ethiopia and the enormous burden this has placed on the country's infrastructure and meagre resources,

Deeply concerned also about the grave consequences this has entailed for Ethiopia's capability to grapple with the effects of the prolonged drought and rebuild the country's economy,

Aware of the heavy burden placed on the Government of Ethiopia and of the need for immediate and adequate assistance to refugees, voluntary returnees, displaced persons, demobilized soldiers and victims of natural disasters,

Deeply concerned about the burden that has been placed on the Government and people of Kenya because of the continuing influx of refugees from strife and famine-stricken neighbouring countries,

Recognizing the great contribution and sacrifices the Government of Kenya has made and continues to make to deal with this situation while facing deteriorating conditions caused by the impact of the long drought that has affected its own population,

Emphasizing the importance and necessity of continuing assistance to the estimated over half a million refugees and diplaced persons in Kenya until such time as this situation has changed,

Deeply concerned about the tragic impact the civil war in Somalia continues to have on the lives of its people, affecting 4 to 5 million people, who are either refugees in neighbouring countries or internally displaced and are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance,

Aware that the voluntary repatriation of large numbers of Somali refugees in neighbouring countries and elsewhere, as well as the return of internally displaced persons to their homes of origin, would require a planned and integrated international assistance programme designed to cover their basic needs, ensure adequate reception arrangements and facilitate their smooth integration into their respective communities,

Convinced that it is necessary that humanitarian assistance to Somali refugees, returnees and displaced persons be mobilized urgently and delivered without delay in view of the deteriorating situation of the displaced persons and returnees and the mounting pressure the refugees continue to place on the host countries,

Recognizing the fact that the Sudan is hosting large numbers of refugees over an extended period of time,

Aware of the economic difficulties facing the Government of the Sudan, and the need for adequate assistance for the refugees and displaced persons in the Sudan and the rehabilitation of the areas in which they are located,

Encouraging the efforts undertaken by the Government of the Sudan and the Office of the High Commissioner towards voluntary repatriation of large numbers of refugees to their homelands,

Deeply concerned about the plight of Sudanese refugee children, particularly the problem of unaccompanied minors, and emphasizing the need for their protection, well-being and reunification with their families,

Considering that the repatriation and reinsertion of returnees and relocation of displaced persons is aggravated by natural disasters and poses serious humanitarian, social and economic problems to the Government of Chad,

Cognizant of the appeal to Member States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to continue to provide the necessary assistance to the Government of Chad to alleviate its problems and improve its abilities to implement the programme of repatriation, reinsertion and relocation of voluntary returnees and displaced persons,

Noting with appreciation the continuing mediatory efforts of the Economic Community of West African States to find a peaceful solution to the Liberian crisis, and the important decision incorporated in both the Yamoussoukro IV Accord of 29 October 1991 and the Final Communiqué of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States of 29 July 1992 aimed at a final settlement of the conflict,

Bearing in mind the findings and recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on emergency humanitarian assistance to Liberian refugees, returnees and displaced persons, particularly the need to continue emergency relief operations since the security situation is not yet propitious for the conduct of large-scale voluntary repatriation,

Taking into account the special emergency appeal for displaced persons in Liberia by the Special Coordinator for Emergency Relief Operations in Liberia,

Deeply concerned about the influx of internally displaced persons, returnees and refugees to Monrovia, and the enormous burden this has placed on the infrastructure and fragile economy of the country,

Also deeply concerned that, despite the efforts made to provide the necessary material and financial assistance for the refugees, returnees and displaced persons, the situation still remains precarious and has serious implications for the long-term national development of Liberia, as well as for those West African countries hosting Liberian refugees,

Recognizing the heavy burden placed on the people and Government of Malawi and the sacrifices they are making in caring for the refugees, given the country's limited social services and infrastructure, and the need for adequate international assistance to Malawi enabling it to continue its efforts to provide assistance to the refugees,

Gravely concerned about the continuing serious social, economic and environmental impact of the massive presence of refugees, as well as its far-reaching consequences for the country's long-term development process and environmental effects,

Bearing in mind the findings and recommendations of the 1991 inter-agency mission to Malawi, particularly on the need to strengthen the country's socio-economic infrastructure in order to enable it to provide for the immediate humanitarian relief requirements of the refugees, as well as the long-term national development needs of the country,

Convinced that, because of the serious economic situation and in particular because of the devastating drought in southern Africa, there is an urgent need for the international community to extend maximum and concerted assistance to southern African countries sheltering refugees, returnees and displaced persons,

Welcoming with appreciation the activities of the High Commissioner for the voluntary repatriation and reintegration of South African returnees, and hoping that the obstacles to the return of all refugees and exiles in conditions of safety and dignity will be removed without delay,

Recognizing the need to integrate refugee-related development projects within local and national development plans,

1. Takes note of the reports of the Secretary-General 1/ and the High Commissioner for Refugees; 2/

2. Commends the Governments concerned for their sacrifices and for providing assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and their efforts to promote voluntary repatriation and other measures taken in order to find appropriate and lasting solutions;

3. Expresses deep concern at the serious and far-reaching consequences of the presence of large numbers of refugees and displaced persons in the countries concerned and the implications for their long-term socio-economic development;

4. Expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General, the High Commissioner for Refugees, the specialized agencies of the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, donor countries and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations for their assistance in mitigating the plight of the large number of refugees, returnees and displaced persons;

5. Expresses the hope that additional resources will made available for general refugee programmes to keep pace with refugee needs;

6. Appeals to Member States, international organizations and non-governmental organizations to provide adequate and sufficient financial, material and technical assistance for relief and rehabilitation programmes for the large number of refugees, voluntary returnees and displaced persons and victims of natural disasters;

7. Requests all Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to pay particular attention to the special needs of refugee women and children;

8. Calls upon the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner and other United Nations humanitarian agencies to continue their efforts to mobilize humanitarian assistance for the relief, repatriation, rehabilitation and resettlement of refugees, returnees and displaced persons, including for those refugees in urban areas;

9. Requests the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to mobilize adequate financial and material assistance for the full implementation of ongoing projects in rural and urban areas affected by the presence of refugees, returnees and displaced persons;

10. Requests the High Commissioner to continue her efforts with the appropriate United Nations agencies and intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental organizations in order to consolidate and increase essential services to refugees, returnees and displaced persons;

11. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive and consolidated report on the situation of refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, under the sub-item "Questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons", and an oral report to the Economic and Social Council at its regular session of 1993.